

XXIII. *Account of a Child who had the Small-pox in the Womb.*
In a Letter from William Wright, M. D. F. R. S. to John Hunter, Esq. F. R. S.

Read May 21, 1781,

Southampton-buildings, Holborn,
Feb. 27, 1781.

SIR,

I HAVE read with much pleasure and information Mrs. FORD's case, which you published in Phil. Transf. vol. LXX. p. 128. From the facts you have adduced it amounts to a certainty, that her foetus had received the variolous infection in the womb.

This induces me to lay before you a singular case, that fell under my care some years ago. I am sorry I cannot be more particular, having unfortunately lost all my books and my notes of practice of this case and several others, by the capture of the convoy on the 9th of last August.

In 1768 the small-pox was so general in Jamaica that very few people escaped the contagion. About the middle of June Mr. PETERKIN, merchant at Martha-brae, in the parish of Trelawney, got about fifty new negroes out of a ship: soon after they landed, several were taken ill of a fever, and the small pox appeared; the others were immediately inoculated. Amongst the number of those who had the disease in the natural way, was a woman of about twenty-two years of age, and big with child. The eruptive fever was slight, and the small-pox

small-pox had appeared before I saw her. They were few, distinct and large, and she went through the disease with very little trouble, till on the fourteenth day from the eruption she was attacked with the fever, which lasted only a few hours. She was, however, the same day taken in labour, and delivered of a female child with the small-pox on her whole body, head, and extremities. They were distinct and very large, such as they commonly appear on the eighth or ninth day in favourable cases. The child was small and weakly; she could suck but little; a wet nurse was procured, and every possible care taken of this infant, but she died the third day after she was born. The mother recovered, and is now the property of ALEXANDER PETERKIN, Esq. in St. James's Parish.

In the course of many years practice in Jamaica, I have remarked, that where pregnant women had been seized with the natural small-pox, or been by mistake inoculated, that they generally miscarried in the time of, or soon after, the eruptive fever; but I never saw any signs of small-pox on any of their bodies, except on the child's above mentioned.

I am, &c.

